



CHARLOTTE FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE
Fire Prevention Bureau

Code/Procedural Interpretation

CFD Interpretation: Use of Carpet in Enclosed Stairways

Date: June 9, 2014

Code Reference: North Carolina Building Code, Section 804, and NFPA Fire Protection Handbook, Volume I, 20th Edition

Subject:

Is floor carpeting allowed in enclosed stairways?

Interpretation:

Floor carpeting is allowed in enclosed stairways; however it must meet certain criteria that classify it as either "Class I" or "Class II" in accordance with NFPA 253 (Radiant Panel Test method). Depending on the type occupancy and/or whether or not the building is fully protected with a fire sprinkler system will determine which class is permitted. The "Class" refers the flame propagation across the tested specimen resulting in the determined "critical radiant flux". Class I has a critical radiant flux of 0.45 W/cm² and Class II has a critical radiant flux of 0.22 W/cm².

The best way to determine which class is to contact the carpet supplier and request test documentation.